

I. Amendments to the Specification

Please add the following new paragraph at [0001] of the specification:

This application is a national stage filing under 35 U.S.C. §371 of International Application No. PCT/US2003/025470, filed August 13, 2003, which claims the benefit of Provisional Application No. 60/403,726, filed August 15, 2002.

At page 12, please replace the second sentence in the third full paragraph with the following amended sentence:

This method comprises taking an aliquot of the sample and adding a predetermined NA antibody, such as RQ11+12 RNA (SEQ. ID No. 6), or a functional fragment thereof to the sample.

At page 13, please replace the first sentence in the second full paragraph with the following amended sentence:

An example of a protocol for forming an agglomeration complex is as follows: Incubate about 0.83 pmoles of human recombinant prion protein ("hrPrP", a prion protein) with about 0.2 pmoles (or with 1.2 pmoles) of a NA antibody like RQ11+12 RNA (SEQ. ID No. 6).

At page 16, please replace the third sentence in the third full paragraph with the following amended sentence:

Approximately 1.6 pmoles of NA antibody like RQ11+12 RNA (SEQ. ID No. 6) is incubated in a binding buffer (approximately 50 mM MOPS, pH 7.5; 1 mM EGTA; 50 mM LiCl; 5 mM MgCl₂; 1 mM DTT; 0.05% NP-40; 0.05% DOX; 5% glycerol; 1 µg BSA; 1 µg tRNA) with about 0.3 nmol of prion protein together with bovine calf serum, (about 80 µg protein) in about 10 µL of the binding buffer in the presence of a pharmaceutical test agent for about 1 hour at around ambient temperature.

At page 17, please replace the second sentence in the third full paragraph with the following amended sentence:

Seven pmoles of hrPrP was incubated with 123 fmoles of the RQ11+12 RNA ("RQ RNA") (SEQ. ID No. 6) in 10 μ L binding buffer for 17 hours at room temperature.

At page 18, please replace the second sentence in the second full paragraph with the following amended sentence:

RQ RNA (SEQ. ID No. 6) was incubated in 10 μ L of a binding buffer (50 mM MOPS, pH 7.5; 1 mM EGTA; 50 mM LiCl; 5 mM MgCl₂; 1 mM DTT; 0.05% NP-40; 0.05% DOX; 5% glycerol; 1 μ g BSA; 1 μ g tRNA) with 250 ng of *hrPrP* in the presence of human or bovine calf serum (80 μ g protein) for 1 hour at room temperature.

At page 18, please replace the third sentence in the third full paragraph with the following amended sentence:

Approximately 1.6 pmoles of RQ11+12 RNA (SEQ. ID No. 6) was incubated in a binding buffer (50 mM MOPS, pH 7.5; 1 mM EGTA; 50 mM LiCl; 5 mM MgCl₂; 1 mM DTT; 0.05% NP-40; 0.05% DOX; 5% glycerol; 1 μ g BSA; 1 μ g tRNA) with 0.3 nmol of *hrPrP* together with bovine calf serum, (80 μ g protein) in 10 μ L of the binding buffer in the presence of chlorpromazine for 1 hour at ambient temperature.